

FOIA b3b

CIA Was Accused In 1958 Indonesian Revolt

CPYRGHT



(Editor's Note — Seven years ago, in 1958, Indonesian President Sukarno faced another rebellion from within his government. He overcame that one, but not before his forces captured an American pilot flying with the rebel forces and apparently being paid by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. Like Singapore's prime minister, Sukarno used the incident as the basis for exacting various favors from the American government.)

By RICHARD J. POTHIER
Patriot Ledger Staff Reporter

The present state of confusion in Indonesia came about when President Sukarno's bodyguard attempted to seize power and forestall another coup planned, he said, by "subversive" generals in league with the CIA.

Bombing Attack

Whether or not the rebellious Colonel Untung was correct about the CIA's involvement in the latest series of uprisings in Indonesia, "crying CIA" probably comes easier to Indonesians

than to most other nations because of a little-known but significant series of events during the Indonesian rebellion in 1958.

Sukarno made good use of his capture of an American bomber pilot flying for the rebels and the CIA—he used it for leverage to remove an embargo on American arms sales to his nation and to reverse an adverse decision on the sale of much-needed rice.

The story began May 18, 1958, when Indonesian anti-aircraft fire shot down a B-26 bomber that had just completed a bombing and strafing run on a government airstrip during a naval rebellion against Sukarno.

Piloting the plane was Allen Lawrence Pope, 29, a veteran military pilot who had rounded out a successful career by dropping supplies to the French forces at Dienbienphu, Viet Nam, while flying for a small airline called "Civil Air Transport" of Formosa, a thinly-disguised American governmental operation.

When it became clear that Pope had been captured and was alive, U.S. Ambassador Howard P. Jones hurriedly dismissed Pope as "a private American

fortune."

Three weeks before his capture, President Dwight D. Eisenhower denied Indonesian charges that the U.S. was supporting the rebellion against Sukarno.

Eisenhower's Statement

At a press conference on April 30, 1958, the President said:

"Our policy is one of careful neutrality and proper deportment all the way through so as not to be taking sides where it is none of our business. Now on the other hand, every rebellion that I have ever heard of has its soldiers of fortune...That is probably going to happen every time you have a rebellion."

But within five days of Pope's capture, odd things began to happen between Washington and Jakarta:

—The State Department suddenly approved the long-delayed sale to Indonesia for local currency of 37,000 tons of rice.

—America lifted the embargo on \$1 million in small arms, aircraft parts and radio equipment that had been destined for Indonesia but recalled and frozen since the rebellion started.